

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. **(Currently Amended)** A composition for consumption, said composition comprising an viable lactic acid micro-organism, an enzyme synthesised by said micro-organism and an exopolysaccharide (EPS) product of said enzyme; wherein said micro-organism is *Lactobacillus sakei* strain 570.

2. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 1 wherein the EPS product is formed *in situ* by cultivating the lactic acid micro-organism with a suitable enzyme substrate.

3. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said enzyme is glycosyl transferase enzyme, fructosyl transferase enzyme or glucan sucrose enzyme capable of polymerising sucrose and/or lactose and/or stachyose, and/or raffinose and/or verbascose

Claims 4-6. **(Cancelled)**

7. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~claim 6~~ wherein said EPS is a homo-EPS.

8. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 7 wherein said homo-EPS comprises at least a polysaccharide and/or an oligosaccharide component.

9. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 8 wherein said polysaccharide and/or oligosaccharide component of the EPS comprises glucose.

Claims 10-12 **(Cancelled)**.

13. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~claim 12~~ wherein the polysaccharide or the oligosaccharide component of the EPS comprises fructan or glucan.

14. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 13 wherein the oligosaccharide is fructo-oligosaccharide or gluco-oligosaccharide.

15. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any of the preceding claims~~ wherein the amount of produced EPS is capable of being modulated.

16. **(Original)** A composition according to claim 15 wherein said amount of EPS is modulated by the number of viable lactic acid microorganisms, the length of the fermentation process, the incubation temperature, the pH or the acceptor molecule maltose.

17. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein said EPS improves the texture, body, mouth feel, viscosity, structure and/or organoleptic properties of food product containing said EPS as an ingredient.

18. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein the composition is used to ferment milk and produce a yoghurt like ingredient containing structure forming EPS and/or nutritional oligosaccharide.

19. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein the composition acts as prebiotic when used as an ingredient to products for consumption or to pharmaceutical products.

20. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any of the preceding claims~~ wherein the components of the composition have the capacity to reduce the production of gas by the gastrointestinal microorganisms when used as ingredients to products for consumption or to pharmaceutical products.

21. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein said composition is in a concentrated form.

22. **(Currently Amended)** A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein said composition is freeze dried, spray dried and/or resuspended.

23. **(Cancelled)**

24. **(Currently Amended)** A product for consumption obtained by ~~the~~ a method comprising admixing a composition with another component so as to form said product for consumption; wherein said composition is a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 of claim 23.

25. **(Cancelled)**

26. **(Currently Amended)** A food product obtained by ~~the~~ a method comprising admixing a composition with another component so as to form said food product; wherein said composition is a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 of claim 25.

27. **(Currently Amended)** A product according to claim 24 ~~or claim 26~~ wherein the composition is added to a dairy product, ~~preferably to yoghurt milk.~~

28. **(Currently Amended)** A product according to claim ~~[[27]]~~ 45 wherein the composition is added to yoghurt milk before and/or after the fermentation of said milk.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The product according to ~~claim 27 or claim 28~~ claim 26 wherein the product is a functional food.

Claims 30-31 **(Cancelled)**.

32. **(Currently Amended)** A pharmaceutical product produced by ~~the~~ a method comprising admixing a composition with another component to produce said pharmaceutical product, wherein said composition is a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 of claim 30 or claim

~~31.~~

33. **(Currently Amended)** A container comprising a composition, wherein said composition is a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any one of claims 1 to 16~~.

34. **(Currently Amended)** A container comprising a composition, wherein said composition is a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2 ~~any one of claims 1 to 16~~, and wherein said container has thereon a label indicating use and/or approval for use to improve the microbial balance of the gastrointestinal tract after consumption of said product.

Claims 35-43. **(Cancelled)**

44. **(New)** A product according to claim 26 wherein the composition is added to a dairy product.

45. **(New)** A product according to claim 27 wherein the composition is added to yoghurt milk.

46. **(New)** A food product comprising as a food ingredient a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2.

47. **(New)** A pharmaceutical product comprising a composition according to claim 1 or claim 2.